

The Olympic Games

Every four years since 1896, except during times of war, the best sportsmen and sports women in the world have met together for the Olympic Games .

In 1896 - the first of the modern Olympics - two hundred athletes from fourteen countries tried to win medals in forty-three events. In the Games today, there are more than ten thousand athletes from nearly two hundred countries for nearly two hundred events. Then there were nine sports. Now there are more than twenty-five.

[The Olympic Games are the greatest sports meeting in the world. It brings together people from almost every country. Being at the Olympics is the life's dream for thousands of athletes ; winning an Olympic medal is their highest goal.]

Some people think that the Olympics today are too big or that money is too important in the Olympics. Many do not like the way Olympic cities are chosen. Some people just hate sport.

But most people love the Games - the excitement, the danger and the athletes who, in the words of the Olympic motto are "faster, higher, stronger".

The word *Olympic* comes from the town of Olympia where the Greeks began to have games as a way of giving thanks to the gods.

The first Olympics which we are sure about were in 776 BC but they probably started a long time before this. The Games became very important. Wars stopped while the Games were on. People then were just as crazy about sports as they are now and they came a very long way to watch : the stadium at Olympia could hold 20,000 people. The athletes were often from rich families and were very serious about sports. They came from all over the Greek world but foreigners could not compete and women could not even watch.

The Greeks gave us the Olympics but it was a Frenchman who gave us the modern Games. Pierre de Coubertin (1863-1937) was interested in the ancient Greeks and their ideas about the importance of a healthy mind in a healthy body. He believed that sport could make every one a better person and that people should do sport for love, not money.

Adapted from OLYMPIC GAMES by STEVE FLINDERS

VOCABULARY :

776 BC : 776 avant Jésus-Christ
foreigners : étrangers
compete : (ici) participer
healthy : sain
mind : esprit

TRAVAIL A FAIRE PAR LE CANDIDAT

I - Recopiez la bonne réponse (CAP 4 pts / BEP 2pts):

- 1) The document is about :
 - a) the Olympic Games in Sydney.
 - b) the Olympic Games of 1896.
 - c) the history of the Olympic Games.

- 2) The first Games come from :
 - a) the Greeks.
 - b) a Frenchman called Pierre de Coubertin.
 - c) American athletes.

- 3) Nowadays, the Games take place :
 - a) every summer and winter.
 - b) every year in summer.
 - c) every four years in summer or winter.

- 4) The first Greek athletes were :
 - a) poor but famous.
 - b) rich and very motivated.
 - c) crazy about money.

II - Dites si les affirmations suivantes sont vraies (RIGHT) ou fausses (WRONG), ensuite, recopiez le passage précis du texte justifiant votre réponse. (CAP : 6pts / BEP : 6pts):

- 1) Today, nine sports are represented in the Olympics. In 1896, 40 countries were represented.
- 2) The athletes compete to get a medal.
- 3) The Greeks had games to thank the town of Olympia.
- 4) The ancient Olympics were stopped by wars.
- 5) At that time people from all over the world could compete.
- 6) Pierre de Coubertin thought that sport couldn't change people.

III - Construisez une phrase contenant un comparatif avec les éléments suivants (CAP 4pts / BEP 4pts):

- 1) The Olympic Games / The Wimbledon tennis tournament (**popular** : supériorité)
- 2) David Douillet / Yannick Noah (**famous** : égalité)
- 3) Manchester United / Cosmos (**better** : supériorité)
- 4) Cowboy boots / Sports shoes (**comfortable** : infériorité)

IV - Posez les questions se rapportant aux mots soulignés : (CAP : 2 pts / BEP : 4 pts)

- 1) The first modern Olympics took place in 1896.
- 2) There were nine sports .
- 3) Pierre de Coubertin gave us the modern Games .
- 4) The first Olympic Games took place in Olympia .

V - Traduisez le passage entre crochets (CAP : 4pts / BEP : 4pts)

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